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THE UNITARIAN.

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ADDRESS TO OUR READERS.

It being usual to introduce a fresh publication of this kind to the notice of its readers by an Address from the Editor or Proprietors, we at once comply with this salutary custom, though it might be said, that the title we have adopted is so comprehensive, straightforward, and unmistakeable, as well nigh to relieve us from the task of further explanation. Still, we know very well, and most of our readers will probably agree with us, that a name or term like the one we have chosen—employed as a general designation—may be sufficient to indicate our purpose in the main, and yet may not be quite definite enough to satisfy the various classes of minds specifically differing, though generically agreeing in opinion, without some more detailed exposition of our views and objects than what the title of our humble publication alone would import.

For this reason, and some other collateral ones, we beg to inform our readers that the main object of this periodical will be to advocate and diffuse those religious views, that practical morality, and, if we may thus venture to speak, that sound philosophy, which are entertained and advocated by that class of Christians denominated Unitarian. We do not intend to confine ourselves to theological topics, though, undoubtedly, they will constitute one principal feature of our labours. The claims of Literature and the Arts, of Science and Philosophy, will,

we trust, not go unregarded by us; but these latter, so far as our humble efforts may be employed on a critical exposition or elucidation of them, we shall be ever disposed to consider in their immediate or remoter relations with the former, inasmuch as it is thus only, we conceive, by a reference—an enlightened and rational reference of secular studies and pursuits to divine—that we are entitled to look upon them as conducive to the glory of God or the happiness and well-being of Man. This idea of the intimate connection subsisting between things "spiritual and temporal," to the production of good and salutary fruits, may not, indeed, be remarkable for its novelty; but it may not be the less just or correct on that account. To the question of "*for what good?*" applied to any new discoveryin science or philosophy, or any physical apparatus calculated to accelerate, in a greater or less degree, the progress of human civilization, we hold it most rational to reply by considerations, as to whether, and in what manner, the means are thereby increased which tend to realize the great consummation so beautifully described by the prophet, when the spirit of the Gospel shall have triumphed over every obstacle, and man, enlightened and ameliorated by the successive conquests of truth, and science, and Christianity, shall have exchanged the attitude of hate and defiance, and "all uncharitableness," for the celestial graces of mutual kindness and brotherly love; a blessed period indeed, and widely differing from the present, but perhaps not more so than the present differs from ages that have gone by.

But, leaving all visionary speculations as to the future, our business is more immediately with the actual and the present. Nothing of a moral, any more than of a physical nature can be accomplished without the proper and adequate means. An enlightened intelligence acting upon a just interpretation of the Christian religion, combined with a practical feeling of the invigorating spirit of Divine truth, must ever constitute the most powerful and

efficient agency for advancing the civilization of man. It will adopt various modes of developing its energies. In a critical and transitional age more of these will spring into existence than in what may be called, comparatively speaking, a quiescent and stationary period. Thus, at the present day, which certainly possesses the former characteristics, besides the long-established and universally recognised modes of disseminating the blessings of Christian doctrine, we have other institutions of collateral efficacy almost too numerous to mention. It is our design to notice from time to time the state and proceedings of the more efficient and remarkable of these. There are Sunday Schools for the young, Book and Tract Societies for adults, and Temperance Societies for all. Those in populous neighbourhoods, and especially where the principles of Unitarianism have gained an extensive footing, will more particularly attract our attention. And if our friends in the localities alluded to, (not excluding others), will supply us at suitable times with the particulars of their proceedings or improvement, we shall be most happy to insert, or, as occasion may require, to prominently notice, their communications.

It may perhaps be said that there are already publications in the Unitarian body which take cognizance of these subjects. We are aware of this fact, and rejoice at it. We do not expect that our small periodical will interfere with the usefulness or circulation of these publications, nor are we anxious that it should. We have too great a respect for our contemporaries and fellow-labourers in the same good cause, to wish, even if we had the means or the power, to supersede their useful, and now, more than ever, necessary efforts. All that we aim at is, an humble endeavour, by means of a small and cheap publication, to concentrate in a not inconvenient compass not only the distinguishing tenets of Unitarianism, but the more prominent and striking proceedings and movements of the Unitarian denomination during the preceding

month, and at a price which shall admit of their becoming known *at once* to each member, of the Unitarian body, however circumscribed in means, without the delay necessarily incurred in the case of the more elaborate and extensive, and hence more costly periodicals.

Our success in this undertaking depends partly, we are aware, on the ability, information, and talent brought to bear on the monthly production of the UNITARIAN; and partly, we are also assured, on the good spirit, the kindly efforts and wishes of the respective members of the denomination themselves, which we hope and trust will not be withheld, if the publication should at all meet their views and expectations, seeing that we have undertaken it from pure love to the cause, and on our own individual risk and responsibility.

WHAT IS UNITARIANISM?

IT is not Deism. It is not Socinianism. And yet it has suited, and, we regret to say, still suits, the purpose of some parties to represent it as either the one or the other. It is our aim to set forth in a few pages the leading doctrines and views of Unitarian Christianity, so that the reader may be put in possession at once of its characteristic tenets and principles; he will then be able to judge for himself how far the representations of those who speak of it as Deistical or Socinian, are founded in truth or fact.

We will not say that our exposition will be consonant with the views and conscientious belief of *all* Unitarians, because they differ among themselves; but that the following are the religious opinions of the far greater portion of that calumniated body of Christians we think we may undertake to affirm. But let it be fully understood, that we here intend merely to state what *are* the doctrines of the Unitarians, not the *arguments* on which those doctrines are founded.

A Deist professes to follow no particular religion, but merely acknowledges the existence of God. The Uni-

tarian, on the other hand, believes in both the Old and the New Testaments, on the latter of which his principles are founded, inasmuch as he receives the several books which compose that volume, the Histories and the Epistles, as the record of a religion revealed from Heaven through Jesus Christ, for the guidance and comfort of mankind here, and their salvation hereafter. Thus, then, the Unitarian believes in *revelation,* both the Jewish and Christian; that is, he believes them both to rest on a *supernatural* foundation. In Jesus of Nazareth he confesses a teacher commissioned and sent by God; the founder of a religion which God appointed him to convey to man; the Messiah, inspired with divine wisdom, and qualified and enabled by the performance of numerous and undeniable miracles, to lay the foundation of the everlasting kingdom of righteousness, the kingdom of God and of his Anointed. The writings of the New Testament the Unitarian receives as a collection of books, faithfully written from what they saw and heard, by the immediate disciples of our Lord. And these books he accepts as the best gift of God to man; he would endeavour to live according to their precepts; he would gladly die by them in the blessed hope of an immortality as well grounded and sure, as the universe itself.

Thus receiving the whole Bible as containing the accounts of two distinct revelations of God to man—the one addressed to the Jews and adapted to the childhood of the human race, the other intended for all mankind—the Unitarians have ever been among the most learned and zealous and satisfactory defenders of the Sacred Volume from the assaults of its impugners. Yet do they not regard it with a blind, credulous, superstitious reverence. They do not take every word and verse in the sense that might first present itself to an ignorant, uncultivated reader. They endeavour to understand the true sense by the employment of all those means legitimately resorted to in the interpretation of any other book of like antiquity. And this brings us to the question of the principles of Scriptural interpretation adopted by the class of Christians in whose name we write; which principles are so well expounded by the pious and eloquent Dr. Channing, that we cannot do better than quote his words:

"Our leading principle in interpreting Scripture," says

he, "is this, that the Bible is a book written for men, in the language of men, and that its meaning is to be sought in the same manner as that of other books. We believe that God, when he speaks to the human race, conforms, if we may so say, to the established rules of speaking and writing. How else would the Scriptures avail us more than if communicated in an unknown tongue?

"The New Testament is built on the Old. The Christian dispensation is a continuation of the Jewish, the completion of a vast scheme of Providence, requiring great extent of view in the reader. Still more, the Bible treats of subjects on which we receive ideas from other sources besides itself, such subjects as the nature, passions, relations, and duties of man; and it expects us to restrain and modify its language by the known truths which observation and experience furnish on these topics. We profess not to know a book which demands a more frequent exercise of reason than the Bible. We find that the different portions of this book, instead of being confined to general truths, refer perpetually to the times when they were written, to states of society, to modes of thinking, to controversies in the Church, to feelings and usages which have passed away, and without the knowledge of which we are constantly in danger of extending to all times and places, what was of temporary and local application. We find, too, that some of these books are strongly marked by the genius and character of their respective writers; that the Holy Spirit did not so guide the Apostles as to suspend the peculiarity of their minds; and that a knowledge of their feelings, and of the influences under which they were placed, is one of the preparations for understanding their writings. With these views of the Bible, we feel it our bounden duty to exercise our reason upon it perpetually; to compare, to infer, to look beyond the letter to the spirit; to seek in the nature of the subject, and the aim of the writer, his true meaning; and, in general, to make use of what is known, for explaining what is difficult, and for discovering new truths."

But do not all classes of Christians, and Protestants in particular, make use of their reason in interpreting Scripture? How else can the latter reconcile with their creed the declaration of Christ that "unless we eat his flesh and

drink his blood we have no life in us?" How do all understand his saying that he "came not to send peace but a sword;" that we must "hate father and mother," and "pluck out the right eye," &c., &c.? Hence, where there is a variety of possible interpretations, the Unitarian exercises no greater freedom of selection than any other Christian; he selects that which he conceives accords best with the nature of the case, with the connexion of the passage, with the general strain of Scripture, and with the known and obvious laws of God and Nature. "In other words," proceeds Channing, "we believe that God never contradicts in one part of Scripture, what he teaches in another; and never contradicts, in revelation, what He teaches in his works and Providence. And we, therefore, distrust every interpretation which, after deliberate attention, seems repugnant to any established truth. We reason about the Bible precisely as civilians do about the Constitution under which we live; who are accustomed to limit one provision of that venerable instrument by others, and to fix the precise import of its parts by inquiring into its general spirit, into the intentions of its authors, and into the prevalent feelings, impressions, and circumstances of the time when it was framed. Without these principles of interpretation, we frankly acknowledge that we cannot defend the divine authority of the Scriptures. Deny us this latitude, and we must abandon this book to its enemies."

Religion, being paramount to all other things, surely requires the most diligent exercise of our highest faculties in its concerns. We might, with comparative innocence, abandon our understanding in the pursuits of philosophy or science, receiving their propositions with a blind and credulous assent. But *wilfully* to suppress the exercise of our reason on the infinitely important subject which is so closely allied to our temporal and eternal happiness, would be more than inexcusable. But even they, we repeat, who blame Unitarians for a too free use of the principles of criticism above explained, in determining the sense of Scripture, do themselves use them in their controversies with infidels; and most frequently, too, in the construction and support of their own system of opinions. Indeed, none reason more than these sects of Christians. Thus, the doctrine of the Trinity is a doctrine of infer-

ence, which could not stand a moment without the aid of reason—a doctrine, indeed, of reason and reasoning, and not of Scripture. Upon how slight a foundation has been framed the prevailing theory of original sin; and the same may be said of the other distinguishing dogmas of Calvinism, doctrines which are incapable of support but by the most subtle and refined arguments.

"We, indeed, grant," says Channing, "that the use of reason in religion is accompanied with danger. But we ask any honest man to look back on the history of the Church, and say whether the renunciation of it be not still more dangerous. The worst errors have sprung up in that Church which proscribes reason, and demands from its members implicit faith. Besides, it is a plain fact, that men reason as erroneously on all subjects as on religion. Who does not know the wild and groundless theories which have been framed in physical and political science? But who ever supposed that we must cease to exercise reason in nature and society, because men have erred for ages in explaining them? Say what we may, God has given us a rational nature, and will call us to account for it. We may let it sleep, but we do so at our peril. Revelation is addressed to us as rational beings. We may wish in our sloth, that God had given us a system, demanding no labour of comparing, limiting, and inferring. But such a system would be at variance with the whole character of our present existence; and it is the part of wisdom to take revelation as it is given to us, and to interpret it by the help of the faculties which it everywhere supposes, and on which it is founded."

What, then, are the great truths which, according to the principles of scriptural interpretation above expounded, the Unitarians believe the *New Testament* to contain, and Jesus to have taught as he was taught of God?

1st.—They believe in one God, and one only; that is, that he is one spirit, one being, one essence, and in no respect is he two, or three, or four; that he is underived or self-existent; that he always did and always will exist; and that he is ever the same, the infinite, eternal, immutable One, who created, and sustains, and blesses the universe. They consequently reject the doctrine of the Trinity, both on account of its inherent incredibility, and because it has no foundation in Scripture. They regard

it as having originated in heathenism, in the dreams of Plato and his disciples, and taken up and improved upon by the Christian fathers, who were converts from Paganism. It was not, however, till the Council of Nice, in 325, that it received a definite, tangible shape. Mr. Wilson, in his admirable work on "Scripture Proofs and Scriptural Illustrations of Unitarianism" (which the reader will do well to consult), has adduced not fewer than fourteen or fifteen texts from the *New Testament* only, in which the Almighty Author of Universal Nature is *expressly* styled One: whereas it is impossible, with the utmost ingenuity, he proceeds to say, "To extract from the Sacred Scriptures, even a solitary text in which the Deity is explicitly called *Three*. He is, indeed, pronounced to be Three by the decisions of councils and synods, by the dogmatism of creeds and confessions, and by the dicta of learned but fallible men; but, on the other hand, he is declared to be One by much higher authority —by Moses and Christ, by Paul and other inspired individuals, as well as by the Jews who lived in our Saviour's time, and whose God and Father was the very Being whom Jesus himself recognised as his own God and Father. Moreover, Unitarians believe this one God, whose unity they thus deduce from the combined testimony of reason and of Scripture, *to be the only object of their worship*. They are of opinion that to worship *any* other being is a violation of the second command. Jesus worshipped God only; and he solemnly enjoins *us* to worship the Father. The Unitarians have full faith in what are called the *moral attributes* of God. Believing Him to be infinite in power and wisdom, omnipotent, omniscient, and eternal, they also conceive Him as a being of perfect benevolence, holiness, justice, and truth, of mercy and compassion; and that the happiness of his creatures, now and hereafter, is the great and only aim of his providential plan. They accordingly reject the five doctrines of Calvinism, because they invade and destroy these delightful attributes of the Deity, and are founded, it is believed, on a most mistaken system of Scriptural interpretation, and on an entire misapprehension of the language of the Bible."

Such, then, in a very few words, is the great leading article of Unitarian belief. And now it may be asked,

what we have to say in regard to Jesus Christ? next, therefore, and—

2ndly.—*As to the Person of Christ.*—All Unitarians unite in denying that he is the Supreme God. All adopt the language of the New Testament, and say that he is the Messiah, or Anointed—the son of God; our Mediator, and Saviour; since all these names are understood as compatible with his inferiority to the Father, nay, as teaching it. All Unitarians deny the *Deity*, though not the *Divinity* of Christ; some, as Milton for instance, suppose that he pre-existed in great power and glory, was either Creator of this and other worlds, or some great Spirit, and, in the fulfilment of the purposes of Heaven, at the appointed time, veiled his high nature in the humble form of a man, was born of the Virgin, and became our Saviour and teacher. Milton thus represents the Father addressing the Son:—

> "Thou, therefore, whom thou only canst redeem,
> Their nature also to thy nature join;
> And be thyself Man among men on earth,
> Made flesh, when time shall be, of virgin seed,
> By wond'rous birth: Be thou in Adam's room
> The head of all mankind, though Adam's son."
>
> *Paradise Lost.* Book III.

And again, in another part of the same book:

> "Thee next they sang *of all creation first,*
> Begotten Son, Divine Similitude,
> In whose conspicuous countenance, without cloud
> Made visible, the Almighty Father shines,
> Whom else no creature can behold: on thee
> Impress'd the effulgence of his glory abides,
> Transfused on thee his ample spirit rests."

But against this view of our Lord's nature and person others seriously object, and hold that the New Testament teaches that Jesus Christ was a man *divinely inspired,* to make known the will of God as it was imparted to him, and to be the founder, the first herald and preacher, of a new religion. They believe that he came in the name, and was endowed with the wisdom and power of the Father; that he spoke as he was moved by the Father; that the works or miracles he performed were by the power of the Father, manifested through him; in short, that in all that Jesus did, said, and taught, he was an instrument in

the hand of God; and that all the doctrines, precepts, instructions of his ministry, were the suggestions of the Spirit of God dwelling within him. Hence, his *religion is divine*, and *from* God, though his *person* be not.

The difference between Trinitarianism and Unitarianism in this particular may be thought, on the first view of the matter, to be of slight moment to the interests of mankind. But Unitarians do not think so; and their belief in the inferiority of the Son to the Father, and in the *Divinity of the Saviour's Mission and Authority*, unites them in strenuous and persevering efforts to establish the grand truth of the unity of God, from the deep conviction they entertain of the immense importance of that truth to the interests of virtue (which Dr. Channing has indeed so ably illustrated and explained in many parts of his writings), as well as to the reception of Christianity itself by enlightened and reflecting men.

We come, next, to the office and character of Jesus, a subject which our space compels us to dismiss in a very few words. All Unitarians regard him as the Mediator between God and man—that is, the medium through which mercy and pardon and peace were conveyed to our sinning race.

All acknowledge, and receive him as the Messiah, the Son of God, the Anointed Prophet long-expected by Israel. They accept him as their instructor and guide in religious truth; as their Saviour from sin and folly in this state of existence and their punishment in a future life.

Unitarians estimate the character of the Saviour at its highest value. They regard it as one of perfect moral purity and holiness. He was "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners." His spotless example they are anxious to hold up as a faultless model for the imitation of the Christian. The great use to be made of this perfect pattern set before us, is to emulate his virtues, strive to conform ourselves to his likeness, and to suffer the dispositions and affections that were manifested in him, to become rooted and grounded in our hearts.

3rdly.—In no respect, perhaps, do Unitarians differ more from what are called orthodox believers, than in their opinions with regard to the nature and condition of man. They believe the Bible teaches that man comes into being with a nature neither holy nor unholy, but with the

power of becoming either the one or the other; that he is not the object of the divine disapprobation and anger; for God hates only sin, and the infant has not sinned: nor of his moral approbation, for the infant has not yet formed a moral character; but we may safely say he is the object of the complacent regards, of the merciful love of God; "for *He* made man, and made him dependent, brings him into life helpless and weak, physically and morally; yet destines him to happiness, as the end of his being; and he must therefore love him, and feel an interest in his welfare, moral and spiritual, of which no earthly parent, reasoning from the affection which he bears towards his offspring, can form the slightest conception." It will hence be perceived that the doctrine of the Unitarians in regard to this matter, is completely opposed to that of Calvin, which teaches the total depravity of man; —they cannot believe, arguing from the Scriptures as well as the known attributes of the Deity, that man comes into existence under the wrath and curse of God, the heir of hell, by virtue of his descent from Adam. They conceive this idea to be too monstrous, not to say impious, to be entertained for a moment. They hold man's state and condition in the world to be probationary—a state intended to discipline him, by its difficulties and temptations, to the love and practice of virtue, and thus to fit him for Heaven; —that he possesses a moral capacity to make himself what he pleases;—that he is under the power of no necessity, of no eternal decrees which would take away the obligations of active personal virtue; under no irresistible, sudden, supernatural influences, which remove the necessity and the motives for holiness; in short, that he is subjected to no natural and inherited inability, making him incapable of righteous acts and holy thoughts, such as God will vouchsafe to accept and reward.

Closely connected with this point, is that of man's acceptance with God. The complicated system of depravity, predestination, effectual calling, and the like, is considered by Unitarians as not only inconsistent with the simplicity of God's ways, but as contradictory and revolting to every idea formed of his works, his wisdom, his equity, and his goodness. They believe that the Scriptures teach a very different doctrine, with respect to man's salvation; one that better harmonises with the character and attributes

and dealings of God, as well as with the nature of man—one that gives every possible encouragement to moral virtue. They believe, then, that *faith toward God and repentance through our Lord Jesus Christ*, their sincerity being tested by a life of holiness, piety, purity, and benevolence, *are the conditions of salvation, according to the New Testament*. And now, it may be asked, is man then capable of perfect holiness, and can he *claim* eternal life on the ground of his own righteousness? To this we reply in the words of an able expositor of Unitarian belief, "God forbid; God's *free, unpurchased, infinite mercy*, is the ground of our assurance and our hope. And we think it a ground large enough for the whole universe to stand upon. We believe, through the Scriptures, that as God requires forgiveness in man towards man, as the first and last of his virtues, so he possesses the attribute himself in all its loveliness and perfection; and, as our Lord has represented in the Parable of the Prodigal Son, stands ever ready with the outstretched arms of parental love, to receive and forgive the returning—the reformed sinner. This we believe to be the simple and sublime teaching of revelation; and that God does not demand that his forgiveness shall be bought, *forced from him by the voluntary sacrifice and death in man's stead of the infinite God, his equal and son!*"

Accordingly, Unitarians reject the commonly received doctrine of the Atonement. We need not stop to describe that doctrine; suffice it to say, that they consider it as most unscriptural, and most subversive of God's moral character, and the interests of vital religion. This doctrine, which the generality of Christians hold, if it seems to provide an easy method of salvation, does so at the expense of God's justice and mercy; if it represents the Son of God as full of benevolence, it represents the Father as unforgiving, unjust, and unmerciful; it drives us from the mercy-seat of the Father Almighty to the compassion of the self-immolating Son; and when we come to that petition which our Lord has told us to offer up,—"Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us"—it seals our lips, teaching us that God himself does not and cannot forgive.

If it be asked, what efficacy, then, do Unitarians ascribe to the *death* of Christ?—they answer, a moral one; to it

they attribute the *same kind* of power which they do to his life, example, precepts, and sufferings. His death was necessary that he might establish and put beyond doubt or cavil that most efficacious, and most important to the Christian, of all truths, the resurrection from the dead, and the retributory state. By the manner of his death, he set the seal of truth to his character and revelation; by his death he has opened the way to everlasting life, has established the truth of man's resurrection, and the connected one of his immortality and the future state; by his death he has taken away the victory from the grave, has divested it of all the terrors and doubts that had always hung over it, and ever would have shrouded it but for the example of his victory. Thus did his death answer ends unspeakably important. Jesus died that we might live for ever.

Scarcely need it be remarked after this, that Unitarians believe in the resurrection of the dead and the life everlasting. Death they look upon, not so much as even a temporary or momentary extinction of being, but simply as the appointed manner in which the soul passes from one stage of existence to another—from earth to Heaven. Hence, to the virtuous man, death is the gate of life.

But what is your doctrine of rewards and punishments? some one may say. And to this question we reply as briefly as possible in the words of the writer before quoted:—

"We believe this doctrine to be surpassed in importance by no other in the Bible. For, however a few speculative and thinking men might pursue virtue and love it, obey God and love him, without the restraining influences of the doctrine of the future punishment of sin, the great mass of mankind could not, and would not. And while we do not believe the *eternity* of all future punishment of sin, to be the doctrine either of Scripture or reason, and regard it as a tenet that has in many respects an unhappy influence on human conduct and character, we reject, with still stronger disbelief, the doctrine of Universal Salvation, considering it as fraught with the most pernicious consequences—more pernicious to the interests of Christain virtue, or of Christ's religion on earth, than any other opinion ever preached. We have been, and are by many, confounded with Universalists on this point. But we do not receive their distinguishing doctrine; Unitarians look

upon it with dread, and with strong convictions of its immoral influences.

"Rejecting the two extremes—the eternity of future punishment, and the salvation of *all* men, without exception or difference—we adopt what we conceive to be the true doctrine of Scripture on this point; what seems to be implied in all our Saviour's preachings, and in all the writings of his Apostles, viz.: the reward and punishment of mankind according to the deeds done in the body; the righteous adjustment of future suffering, to the sins of each individual. But, though we cannot refuse our most firm belief in this necessary truth of the future suffering of the wicked, yet we think that it is not inflicted to gratify vengeance, or to satisfy an offended law, but for the same purpose, with the same view, that sufferings are permitted here—in order to the reformation, discipline, and improvement of the sufferer. We believe that the suffering of *futurity* is made subservient to the same good and sublime end, as pain and suffering *on earth*, namely, man's moral perfection, and hence, eventually, his highest happiness; that it will, therefore, be disciplinary, remedial, purifying, saving in its character, and will, consequently, at one time cease—at *that time*, whenever it shall be, that the offender shall be reformed by it, and restored to the love and practice of virtue, to the love of God and to a perception of the real greatness of his nature, and the true ends of his being. Most Unitarians, however, are satisfied to use the Scripture expressions on this subject, without pretending to say what Scripture has nowhere said, when those sufferings shall end. Scripture phraseology gives us to understand that those sufferings shall be *great*, and *dreadful*, and *enduring*: we believe it, and tremble in the belief, and repeat without commentary, the words of Christ and his Apostles: 'Verily I say unto you, these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.' 'God will render to every man, according to his deeds; to them that obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil.'"

We have thus endeavoured to give, in a very brief space, for the benefit of the uninitiated, a reply to the often repeated interrogatory—*What is Unitarianism?* We have confined ourselves, it is true, to the leading points of

theological belief, and we have done so because they constitute the source from which flow those views of man, his nature and destiny, of man regarded as an individual or in society, which may be said to distinguish, in general, the Unitarian from almost every other class of Christians. These views have, of late years, been largely developed in the writings of Unitarian divines, particularly of America; and it is to the works of these authors, more especially, not forgetting at the same time those of many excellent English writers, that we must refer the reader for full and satisfactory information on these important topics.

ON CAPITAL PUNISHMENTS.

It is the object of the Unitarian to spread those simple, comprehensive, and elevating views of the nature of God, and the destiny of man, which he believes accordant with reason, and founded on Scripture, and which seem to him best adapted to refine and strengthen the feelings of devotion, the principles of duty, and that love which is the end of the commandment. Accordingly, he shrinks with aversion from those creeds which represent the Almighty Father as a stern and almost vindictive being, and His mortal children as the offspring of Satan; whilst he warmly sympathises with every philanthropic effort, which is an evidence that those kindlier feelings are being awakened in the human mind, which lessen the influence of gloomy and erroneous doctrines, and must lead to their final abandonment.

If there be one movement more than another which seems to strike at the root of the most objectionable part of the popular theology, it is that which has as its object the reformation of our criminal code. The Unitarian feels horror at the notion of Divine wrath, only to be appeased by the torture of the innocent instead of the guilty; he will best dissipate this delusion by teaching that the truest justice is tempered by mercy, and that the criminal ought to call forth the pitying love, rather than the hatred, of the injured. Does he think the doctrine of eternal torments inconsistent with the divine love? he will best undermine this terrible belief by showing, that human

governments ought to correct, whilst they punish, the offender; that every infliction of pain is an evil, unless it lead to ultimate good; and that the welfare of the innocent is best secured by the reformation of the guilty.

If we offer to teach men a pure faith, few will come to hear us, or read our works; and what we say is often regarded as heresy, the more dreadful from its plausibility; but if we assist them to form correct views of human duty, and the relation in which we stand to the ignorant and sinful, they will unconsciously be led to perceive that the principles of government, which they regard as barbarous and antiquated in our own institutions, can hardly be consistent with Divine perfection.

Another advantage of this, among other movements, is that it dissipates prejudice. Persons of different denominations feel their common brotherhood. Sectarian warfare sets men at variance: philanthropic efforts cause them to sympathise. The Unitarian ceases to regard the Calvinist as an unfeeling, narrow-minded bigot: the Calvinist discovers that the Unitarian is not a cold-hearted, conceited man of the world, when they work together, side by side, to promote what they both feel is the practical influence of the Gospel.

We may mention, as another incidental benefit arising from these efforts, that they lead men to think and reason; to doubt the wisdom of their old prejudices, and to see the evil of wrathful and retaliatory modes of action. Moreover, as the letter of Scripture occasionally sanctions the popular system, those who oppose it, and yet own the authority of the Bible, are led to see that the Old Testament is not to be our guide when at variance with the New; and that when we would know what the New really teaches, we must follow rather the scope and spirit of the volume, than one or two detached passages. Let persons be accustomed to this mode of interpretation, and it is obvious that they will soon quit hold of those monstrous dogmas, which are only supported by a few texts quite wrenched out of their connection.

We have now briefly shown why Unitarians, who are anxious for the development of the practical features of their faith, should look with especial interest on the philanthropic efforts of the friends of reformatory punishments: we proceed to allude to what appears to be the

teaching of Scripture on this subject. Very undue stress has been laid on the declaration to Noah—That whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall (or will) his blood be shed: which really implies nothing more than what our lord said to Peter—Those who take the sword, shall perish by the sword. It is a general law of Providence, which has already seen numerous exceptions, and which is to have an end. The first murderer is represented as specially protected by God, and manslayers without number have found a peaceful death. The text may really be taken as an argument *against* capital punishments in the present day, since experience proves that hanging actually leads to fresh murders.*

Moses certainly affixes death as the penalty for many crimes; but, although this indicates that it was proper in a rude state of society, it says nothing as to its present expediency; nor do those who show such deference to his authority, when it suits their purpose, prove their consistency by embracing his whole system of jurisprudence. But, whatever may be the tenor of the Old Testament, when the fulness of time had come, the old things were to pass away, and all things to become new. Our Lord declares that the law of retaliation was to be superseded by that of love. We are to be perfect, as our Father in Heaven; and he corrects those whom He loves, to make them better. We are to regard all men, criminals not excepted, as brethren, and to do to them what we desire should be done to us in similar circumstances. We are members one of another, and if any suffer needlessly, the rest are so far from deriving benefit, that they suffer too. We may take for granted that none of our readers will doubt, that, provided no immunity or encouragement is given to vice, the spirit of the Gospel constrains us not to cut off those who are overtaken in faults—whether small or great—but to restore them in the spirit of meekness. And that, therefore, capital punishments, unless a strong neces-

* See a sermon by R. L. Carpenter, in the "Magazine of Popular Information on Capital and Secondary Punishments," for September 1845, pp. 110, 111, 112. We also refer our readers to an Essay by the same writer, p. 67, &c.: On the punishment of death as ordained by Moses. This magazine, published monthly by W. Blackie, Villafield, Glasgow, is the organ of the friend of reformatory punishments.

city exists for them, are unchristian. We propose, in a future paper, to show that they are not only vindictive but impolitic, and that experience proves that they foster the very evils they are intended to prevent.

R. L. C.

HINTS TO THE WORKING MAN.

How exceedingly desirable that every working man should strive to elevate himself in his social position, and become Independent. With this view, every working man in times of prosperity and good wages, should strive to *save* something, and accumulate a fund in case of bad times—in short, should endeavour to become a Capitalist.

For a working man to be without money, is to be always on the verge of starvation or beggary. Work fails, and on a sudden he is destitute! And yet, by a little frugality, by a little self-denial, perhaps by the disuse of pernicious indulgences, such as tobacco and intoxicating drink, he perhaps might have warded off the blow, have dared to look a bad season in the face, and have provided for himself as a man independent.

Utter dependence on weekly wages, spent as soon as earned, is not a good thing. To be entirely dependent on the Saturday night's wages for the next week's food, is in the end to be dependent on the parish poor-rates. If a man in such case falls out of work, he must either starve with his wife and family, or become a burden on the public, and live out of the industry of others. A man had better never have been born than incur a fate of this kind.

We say, then, that it is the duty of every working-man—especially of such as earn good weekly wages—to save something weekly. This is their duty to society, and their duty to themselves and families. There ought to be no living from hand to mouth. Those who do so, retard the progress of society, because they generally become burdens upon it themselves, or the unprovided families they leave behind them.

But, above all, the working man ought to save, because he should aspire to be independent. He who has accumulated a little capital by his own industry, no longer

feels himself to be the slave to circumstances that the utterly poor man does. He is not buffetted about by every wind of fortune. He bends before the storm, but rises again. He has preserved meanwhile his independence and his self-respect—without which a man's character is worth little indeed.

The working-man who lives within his income, and puts some money in the Savings' Bank, can hold up his head like a man. He has paid his way, as well as saved something, and he is comparatively a free man. He has also, probably, been able to educate his own children without sending them to a charity-school, or paid for a seat in church or chapel, without needing to use the poor's sittings. The man who lives from hand to mouth, and who spends his surplus savings in drink, is never able to do this; he generally lives in anticipation of his means, instead of living within them.

For the reason that we love to see working-men aspiring to be independent, and to save money in any way, we rejoice at the progress of Saving Clubs, Provident Associations, and Benefit Societies; even though we are persuaded there is a very great deal of unnecessary waste connected with many of such institutions. Still, the extensive support which they receive, shows that there is a large amount of calm, prudent, and affectionate forethought, amongst the working-men of this country.

A new description of societies has recently sprung up, which indicate the growth and extension of the economical feeling among the industrious classes. We allude to the Co-operative Land, Building, Mutual Assurance, and other Societies. Working-men have scarcely yet discovered the enormous power which they possess and might exercise by the co-operation of their common means. Co-operation is the grand lever which is yet to move the social world; and to elevate the working-classes from their present position of dependence and poverty. The great questions of economical life and of social development, are only to be solved by means of this silent power. We see its progress in the present amazing nevelopment of the railway system; and we shall yet see it in many other still more formidable shapes. The increase of Societies and Associations of all kinds, for almost all possible purposes, is another manifestation of the same power.

POETRY.

THE FACTORY CHILD.

BY THE HON. MRS. NORTON.

EVER a toiling *child* doth make us sad;
'Tis an unnatural and mournful sight,
Because we feel their smiles should be so glad,
Because we know their eyes should be so bright.
What is it, then, when, tasked beyond their might,
They labour all day long for others' gain,—
Nay, trespass on the still and pleasant night,
While uncompleted hours of toil remain?
Poor little factory slaves, for you these lines complain!

Beyond all sorrow which the wanderer knows
Is that these little pent-up wretches feel;
Where the air thick and close and stagnant grows,
And the low whirring of the incessant wheel
Dizzies the head, and makes the senses reel.
There, shut for ever from the gladdening sky,
Vice premature and Care's corroding seal
Stamp on each sallow cheek their hateful die,
Line the smooth open brow, and sink the saddened eye.

For them the fervid summer only brings
A double curse of stifling, withering heat;
For them no flowers spring up, no wild bird sings,
No moss-grown walks refresh their weary feet;
No river's murmuring sound, no wood-walk sweet,
With many a flower the learned slight and pass;
Nor meadow, with pale cowslips thickly set
Amid the soft leaves of its tufted grass,
Lure *them* a childish stock of treasures to amass.

Have we forgotten our own infancy,
That joys so simple are to them denied?
Our boyhood's hopes, our wandering far and free,
Where yellow gorse-bush left the common wide
And open to the breeze? The active pride
Which made each obstacle a pleasure seem;
When, rashly glad, all danger we defied,
Dashed through the brook by twilight's fading gleam,
Or scorned the tottering plank, and leapt the narrow stream?

In lieu of this, from short and bitter night,
Sullen and sad the infant labourer creeps;
He joys not in the glow of morning's light,
But with an idle yearning stands and weeps,
Envying the babe that in its cradle sleeps.
And ever as he slowly journeys on,
His listless tongue unbidden silence keeps;
His fellow-labourers (playmates hath he none)
Walk by as sad as he, nor hail the morning sun.

THE MECHANIC'S SATURDAY NIGHT.

Now my wife and children let's be gay;
My work is done, and here's the pay—
'Twas hard to earn, but never mind it;
Hope rear'd the sheaf, and peace shall bind it.

Six days I've toil'd, and now we meet
To share the welcome weekly treat
Of toast and tea, of rest and joy,
Which, gained by labour, cannot cloy.

Come ye, who form my dear fireside—
My care, my comfort, and my pride;
Come now, and let us close the night
In harmless talk and fond delight.

To-morrow's dawn brings blessings, peace,
And each domestic's joys increase,
To him who honestly maintains
That course of life which Heaven ordains.

For this and every blessing given,
Thankful, we'll bow the knee to Heaven;
In God's own house, our voices raise,
With grateful notes of prayer and praise.

Sweet's the tranquillity of heart
Which public worship doth impart;
And sweet's the field, and sweet's the road,
To him whose conscience bears no load.

Thus shall the day, as God designed,
Promote my health, improve my mind;
On Monday morning, free from pain,
Cheerful I go to work again.

Our life is but a lengthened week,
Through which with toil for rest we seek;
And he whose labour well is past,
A joyful Sabbath finds at last.

NEW BOOKS.

Teutamen Anti-Straussianum. The Antiquity of the Gospels Asserted, on Philological Grounds, in Refutation of the Mythic Scheme of Dr. David Frederick Strauss. An Argument, by Orlando T. Dobbin, LL.D., Trinity College, Dublin. Pp. 113 Ward & Co., 27, Paternoster-row.

THIS is a remarkable little book, distinguished at once by clearness, precision, candour, and learning. It is earnest in tone, and liberal in spirit. In conducting his Argument the author manifests the same "remorseless logic" that has generally been attributed to his opponent, only, unlike the latter, he builds his well-arranged and symmetrical structure, not on fanciful conjecture or bold assumption, but on an unquestioned and unquestionable fact. He presents us not merely with the forms of reasoning—the links of argumentation in unbroken succession, but the premises on which they depend; the ground from which he starts is firm and impregnable.

The fundamental idea of Strauss's system is the remote composition of the Gospels from the date of the events they describe—a remoteness so great as to allow the garniture and drapery of fiction to be thrown, without detection, around the slender form of reality and truth connected therewith. This foundation of the Straussian scheme—this ground-work of the hazy and poetic speculations of the Mythists, Dr. Dobbin seeks to cut away, by proving from internal evidence that the Gospels must have been written by contemporaries of the events recorded in them.

The fact on which the author's Argument is based, is the peculiar and distinctive usage in the name by which the Saviour is designated in the Gospels and Epistles respectively.

In the Gospels the general though not invariable usage is, to designate the Saviour by the proper name Jesus: in the Epistles the general though not invariable usage is, to designate him by his official title Christ. In both cases the usage named is so habitual as to clearly mark each series of books, however indivi-

dually different, in many respects from each other, as belonging in this respect to two distinct classes. From this fact the author argues that the Gospels must have been written at an earlier date than the Epistles; first, because the Epistolary usage is that which is found to prevail in the annals of the Church, from the last book of canonical Scripture down to the end of the fourth century; and secondly, because, according to the ordinary process of nomenclature, the simple and exclusive proper name must have preceded that of the surname or the title. He further shows, from the broad facts of the Sacred Writings themselves, that the term Christian was extensively applied to the followers of Jesus at a very early period, and he contends that as the Gospels must have been written anterior to such period, their composition is thus brought so near to the time of the events they describe, as to preclude the possibility of the Mythic theory.

Each branch of the Argument is clearly brought out and well supported, and we cordially recommend the work to the attentive perusal of the Christian Inquirer.

Dr. Beard's Dictionary of the Bible.

THE following Circular has been issued in favour of this valuable work, and it gives us great pleasure to hear that upwards of seventy copies have been subscribed for in the locality named: "SOUTHERN UNITARIAN SOCIETY.—We, the undersigned Ministers, connected with the 'Society of Unitarian Christians established in the South of England for promoting the Genuine Knowledge of the Scriptures, and the Practice of Virtue, by the Distribution of Books,'—believing that 'Dr. Beard's Dictionary of the Bible' is admirably calculated to promote the cause of biblical learning and rational piety, and to be especially adapted to excite an interest in the perusal of the Scriptures among the young, and having now been able to form a more accurate opinion of its merits from the parts already published,—beg leave, earnestly and respectfully, to recommend the work to the attention of those desirous of becoming better acquainted with the meaning and contents of the Sacred Volume. John Fullagar, Chichester; Henry Hawkes, Portsmouth; William Hughes, Witcombe, Isle of Wight; Edwin Chapman, Mead Row, Godalming; Maxwell Davidson, Billingshurst; John Cropper, Wareham; Mark Rowntree, Poole; Porter Orr, Ringwood; Thomas Foster, Portsmouth; Edmund Kell, Newport, Isle of Wight, *Secretary of the Southern Unitarian Society.* Names of Subscribers will be received by any of the above Ministers, or the Numbers of the work may be obtained through any of the regular booksellers."

INTELLIGENCE.

THE BELFAST ANNUAL MEETING

Was held on Monday evening, Dec. 1st, in the Gymnasium, and, notwithstanding the great severity of the weather, the attendance was more numerous than we remember before to have seen it.

JOHN ROBERTS, Esq., of Colin, presided.

The meeting was commenced by prayer, by the Rev. C. J. M'ALESTER.

Mr. SEED, the secretary of the society, then read to the meeting letters of apology from the Rev. H. Alexander of Newry; the Rev. Fletcher Blakely, of Moneyrea; and J. Thompson Tennent, Esq.

Mr. SEED next read the report of the society for the past year.

M. ANDREWS, Esq., of Ardoyne, then submitted to the meeting the financial statement of the society.

Dr. MARSHALL briefly moved the adoption of the report, and that the accounts read be received. He had great pleasure in moving that resolution. The only subject of regret that occurred to him was the cessation of the *Bible Christian*. It was rather a disgrace to their body that that valuable and unassuming little publication should cease. It was not only important to himself, but it diffused Bible intelligence widely; and its influence was particularly felt in the country districts. He would be willing to aid in keeping it up as far as it was in his power.

J. DUNVILLE, Esq., said he perfectly agreed in what had fallen from Dr. Marshall. He thought it a disgrace to their body that that publication should be allowed to cease, and, for his own part, he would give double or treble the amount of subscription towards it that he had been in the habit of giving; and he hoped the Committee now to be appointed would consider the matter.

Mr. PORTER then, in reference to the *Bible Christian*, said he was not without some expectation, when the Committee introduced the mention of their purpose to discontinue the publication of that periodical, that some person would step forward to deprecate the measure. He was happy that such a result had occurred. He thought that that work had been exceedingly useful, and that nothing but an absolute necessity would have compelled the Committee to contemplate the change referred to.

Dr. MONTGOMERY said he would pledge himself to give aid to the *Bible Christian* in a greater degree than he had done.

Mr. DUNVILLE afterwards moved a vote of thanks to the Rev. Dr. Montgomery, for the sermons preached by him, on the previous day, in aid of the society.

The motion was seconded by Dr. BURDEN.

The Rev. JOHN SCOTT PORTER expressed himself in terms of the highest admiration of the discourses in question; and said that he would give, himself, a couple of guineas towards the bringing of them before the public.

Dr. MONTGOMERY said he felt gratified that his late orations

had met with the approbation of his friends; not, though, without a feeling of imperfection. They were to advocate, in every Church, the men who maintained liberty of conscience. He had not the slightest doubt that their religion would flourish; and he was convinced, that, in fifty or a hundred years, Unitarianism would be the prevailing religion of these countries. Of that he had no more doubt than he had that he should leave that house that night, under the Providence of God.

The next resolution, which was moved by R. PATTERSON, Esq., and seconded by W. HARTLEY, Esq., referred to the aspect of the present times, as calling on the friends of religious liberty and truth to make renewed efforts for their advancement.

Mr. ALLEN briefly seconded the resolution.

MR. ANDREWS then moved, and Mr. HYNDMAN seconded a resolution expressive of thanks to those ministers who had kindly supplied the congregations of Strabane and Ballymena while under the charge of the Committee. The Rev. GEORGE HILL acknowledged the thanks thus conveyed to himself and the other ministers who had given their services. He said that he would be most happy on any occasion to give them his humble assistance; and he knew he might say the same thing for his brethren. He had hoped to receive a commission from them this evening to supply some new station. The time had arrived, when a universal movement should be made to spread the truth; and he could not help deploring the timidity which seemed to characterise the Unitarians, as if they wanted the power to do good: such timidity they should not have.

The Rev. JOHN SCOTT PORTER moved the next resolution, which was in reference to the contemplated cessation of the publication of the *Bible Christian.* There was no person there who could be unaware of the importance of a well-conducted press. Information, in past times, was communicated orally—in the lecture-room—at the University—by addresses from the pulpit. Books were scarce; and, even if they had been attainable at the time, they would not have been so useful as they were now. Partly, however, through the exertions of education societies, and partly through the liberal and enlightened policy of the Government, a generation had grown up, every individual of which has had the means of instruction put within his reach; and, at the present time, there were few who were not desirous of obtaining information by reading. The political speaker could do much; but his labours would be comparatively confined, if he had not the newspapers to take him up, and report him fairly. He esteemed a well-conducted periodical work as of the utmost value to them. The *Bible Christian* had been productive of most important benefits to their congregations. They had, he was happy to say, a Liberal Press in Ulster, which had raised its voice unceasingly against the oppressor, and he hoped it would long continue to go forward in its useful and independent course. To it they owed a debt of gratitude. Of course, it was not to be expected that that newspaper, a political organ, would enter into the

field of polemical controversy. They would have condemned its editor, had he crowded its columns with matters of that description. The *Bible Christian* supplied the want that was felt. It went into the families and houses of those who had not heard of Unitarians, except as a scorn and a reproach. It was, therefore, with the deepest regret that he even hypothetically gave his sanction to the contemplated discontinuance of that most useful periodical. He hoped the promises of literary contributions to it, from Dr. Montgomery, would be fulfilled; and that every individual who felt himself able, would support its editor in the performance of his duties. Its circumstances, at the present time, were such as to form matter for serious consideration.

A resolution was next passed, in reference to the importance of the Tract Depository; and expressing a hope that the Committee would continue to give attention to that important department of the society's operations.

Mr. Patterson then moved, and Mr. Seed seconded a resolution, calling on those interested in the society, to increase their annual contributions, that larger funds might be placed at the disposal of the Committee.

Mr. M'Alester expressed his desire, that some notice should be taken, at this meeting, of slavery in America, and the conduct of our American brethren in relation to it. It was known to some, but not, perhaps, to all present, that one hundred and seventy Unitarian ministers in the United States, had lately signed a bold and spirited protest against this monstrous evil; and it would be a shame to allow this opportunity to pass, without conveying some expression of our approval and sympathy to our protesting brethren. It was cheering to know, that among the earliest and most uncompromising of the advocates for the freedom of the slave in America, were the members of our Church. Among them, Follen and Channing were perhaps the most conspicuous; but their spirit seems to have been caught by others, and the Unitarians now have taken their place in the front of the great struggle that is going on for human freedom in the American Republic. Mr. M'Alester then proposed a resolution, expressing the delight of the meeting at the protest of the American brethren, and their deep sympathy with them in their struggles for the freedom of the slave. This resolution was seconded by Mr. Porter, supported by Mr. J. R. Neill, and carried unanimously.

A Committee for the ensuing year having been chosen,

Mr. Roberts was moved from the chair, and Alexander Mitchell, Esq., called thereto, when a vote of thanks was given to Mr. Roberts, for his kindness in presiding on the occasion. —*Abridged from the Bible Christian.*

ANTI-SLAVERY MEETING AT BRISTOL.

At a very large meeting—about 1,200 persons—held in Bristol on Monday, 10th November, for the purpose of receiving a deputa-

tion from the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, John Evans Lunell, Esq., in the chair, the following resolutions were passed:—

"1. That whilst this meeting deeply deplores the continued existence and dreadful atrocities of slavery and the slave-trade, they rejoice to learn the encouraging progress of anti-slavery sentiment and effort in various parts of the world, especially in the United States; and would encourage the philanthropists of this, and of every other country, to renewed exertions for the complete overthrow of these gigantic evils."

"2. That whilst this meeting offer no opposition to the free emigration of labourers to the emancipated colonies, when conducted on sound principles, they feel it to be their duty to denounce the present mode of supplying them with labour as unjust in principle, unwise in policy, and inhuman and degrading in its consequences; and would earnestly call on her Majesty's Government and the British Legislature to withdraw their sanction from it. And this meeting would further urge upon the Queen's Government the duty of withholding the sanction of the Crown from all colonial enactments, whether in the form of vagrant, contract, or other laws, the effect of which may be to place the labouring population within the power of their masters, or to give the local justices concurrent jurisdiction with the stipendiary magistrates in the colonies."

"3. That this meeting have learned with painful interest the fact, that several thousands of British subjects are now held in slavery in the Spanish and Dutch colonial possessions, and would respectfully entreat her Majesty's Government to take the necessary measures for securing to them their liberty, and for restoring them to their native homes."

After a statement by John Scobell, Esq., Secretary to the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, full of instructive and harrowing details,

The following address, with the resolution annexed, was then delivered, to a deeply sympathising auditory, by the Rev. George Armstrong:—I can very well believe, Sir, that the circumstance of so short a notice, adverted to by a reverend speaker who has just sat down, has been inconveniently felt by several ministers, whose absence on the present occasion may be justly ascribed to that cause—or, indeed, to any cause—rather than indisposition to the object which has brought us together. Yet I could wish that my reverend brethren of other denominations had been present this evening in larger numbers, because it would have been my hope to place before them a means by which they, in particular, might be able to effectuate one great benefit emphatically referred to this evening—the swelling the voice of sympathy from this country to America, by conveying to their kindred churches beyond the Atlantic, their united testimony against the deep wrong of slavery, and their earnest entreaties that the ministers of those churches would be faithful in the discharge of the high function devolving upon them in relation to that subject. I shall

have more to say upon this topic presently; but, in the meantime, I am anxious it should be felt in how many ways even small efforts, when generally pursued, may be most important aids in the carrying on of the great work to which our hearts, and therefore our hands, should with all readiness and perseverance be devoted. I am desirous of impressing, not only upon my reverend brethren the importance of action from them in this matter but upon laymen, and especially on those to whom the call of humanity is never directed in vain—the females of our country, how easily they may confer the benefit, not only of their sympathy, but of their pecuniary support, by a very small expenditure of time, attention, and material, which, in instances which have come within my knowledge, have drawn after them an abundant requital in the gratitude of those to whose service these efforts were devoted. I allude to a proceeding now in operation for some two or three years in this city—the contributing and collecting of articles for an ANTI-SLAVERY FAIR OR BAZAAR, held about Christmas, every year, in the City of Boston, Massachusetts. In the two last years—and again in the present—some friends have been engaged in this good work, and have been able to transmit to America—to the value of £70 or £80—some suitable articles, slender indeed in pecuniary amount, but far from unimportant as a demonstration of the feeling which suggested even so trifling an aid. Let it no longer be a trifling aid. At least let many hands be engaged in it; and let us, each year hence, work together on a wider scale, and, in friendly rivalry, see who may be most successful, in proportion to their opportunities, in the manifestation of this evidence of the interest here taken in the prosperity of the (Christmas) ANTI-SLAVERY BAZAAR at Boston. We can answer for the pure auspices under which it is conducted; and we have rejoicingly experienced, in the cordiality of the thanks we have received, evidence more than we could expect of the pleasure we have been able to confer. Sir, this feeling in American minds is strong. They are sensible of the value of sympathy, and are abundantly grateful when it is given. I have shown it to be so on small occasions; and we have proof in our hands, that it is commensurately so on large occasions. In the last annual report of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, honourable and grateful mention is made of the Government and the people of England, for "the continued direction of their attention and their energies to the extinction of negro slavery and the slave-trade throughout the world." The report, with pleasure, records, that "the Directors of the East India Company, responding to the demands of the lovers of freedom, had emancipated nearly ten millions of East Indian Slaves;" and goes on to say, that "the day may not be far distant when the great battle for freedom will be decided, with their assistance, in the cotton market of Liverpool; and when *the peaceful emancipation of the American slave will be achieved on the plains of Hindostan.* To many men and women of England we are indebted more directly for expressions of sympathy, and for substantial assistance, afforded during the past year. For *their words of en-*

couragement, and for *their helping hands*, we return them our cordial thanks." But, Sir, I must not forget the task of friendly suggestion to my ministerial brethren of other denominations—with respect to which, I desire to throw myself on their indulgent consideration. May I say, then, how much good they might effect—how important, indeed, might be the result—were they to undertake the duty of affectionately and respectfully *addressing their brethren in the ministry*, more particularly throughout the Northern States (where only they could hope to be heard), imploring them, in language such as it would become one free brother to use to another, to employ the great means at their disposal, in the raising and strengthening of that feeling in their countrymen, and in the souls committed to their charge, which should render the existence of slavery on their soil, from this day forth, insupportable to them, as alike injurious to man, and offensive to God. Whether such steps have already been taken or not, my recollection does not immediately inform me. But this I know, and not without humble gratulation am I enabled to tell it, that such a step *has* been taken by the religious denomination to which it is my honour to belong, and with the very best and happiest result. In the exercise of a brotherly and Christian frankness, a document was drawn up, and extensively signed by the ministers of our persuasion in this country and in Ireland, respectfully but entreatingly reminding our brethren in the States, of the high and solemn responsibility resting on them in the sight of God and man, in regard to the greatest question of the present age. The document was received with kindness, but not with warmth. It was an experiment which had to work its way. And as the event has turned out, we have cause to rejoice that no sudden action was taken. Months elapsed, during which the subject was permeating far and near throughout that portion of the States which it was our desire to influence. Months again followed upon these; and though in the interval we had a decorous acknowledgment, and expressions of fraternal regard, it was not till within the last few days, that the fulness of time had arrived; and that the little leaven, which had been working so well, produced its satisfactory and exhilarating result. Sir, I have in my hand a "PROTEST," on the subject of slavery, which would do honour to any body of men, and of which, as a brother professor, with those who have sent it to us, I take a just pride, on so appropriate an occasion as the present, in making this public and grateful mention. In this eloquent document there is one passage in particular, to which I would beg to draw your attention. It has been a fashion with some, a bold and frequent one with the spiritual guides of the owners of slaves in America, to set up in defence of their "*peculiar institution*" the sanction of the sacred oracles of God. Sir, the subscribers to this noble "PROTEST" have taken such notice of this plea, as divines had a right to take. "We protest," they say, "against any attempt to defend the system from the letter of the Scriptures, or from practices recorded in the Old Testament, as a libel on God and Christ, which would tend, so far as the attempt succeeded, to destroy our

confidence in the Bible. If this system was not prohibited among ancient nations by positive law, it was not for the reason that it was right; but that, like polygamy and other evil practices, 'it was suffered for a time, because of the hardness of their hearts.' And if, from the imperfect knowledge under the old dispensation, —'the time of this ignorance God winked at'—yet now in the light of the Gospel, 'He has commanded all men everywhere to repent.'" Passing over some noble adjurations of their people, and their brethren especially in the South, they go on to say—"We implore all Christians and Christian preachers to unite in increasing prayer to God for aid against this system; to lose no opportunity of speaking the truth and spreading light on this subject, in faith that the truth is strong enough to break every yoke . . . . And we, on our part, do hereby pledge ourselves before God and our brethren, never to be weary of labouring in the cause of human rights and freedom, till slavery be abolished, and every slave made free." Signed by 170 Unitarian ministers of the Northern portion of the United States. [The reading of these extracts, with the comments which preceded and followed, was received by the meeting with the liveliest demonstrations of satisfaction.] Such, Sir, has been the fruit—itself, we doubt not, but the prercusor of a future increase—which, indirectly indeed, but by an easily perceptible connection, has grown out of the humble efforts of faithful hearts here to quicken the generous hearts there, of those whom they now more than ever must hold in honour and esteem! May we not, then, say to brethren of other demominations around—"Go and do ye likewise?" But in this work of quickening and encouraging, we must do something more, and something now. We owe a debt to those who, in the midst of storms and darkness, are bravely clinging to the ark of liberty, and doing a Christian work under difficulty and danger we know not of—we owe them a debt, and we must partly pay it now and here. They want our sympathy, and they shall have it. They rejoice in the encouragement of our kind words, and with all our souls we give it! And now, Sir, although, from want of time, I have not been able to consult at an earlier moment with the conductors of this meeting, shall I not have the consent of this platform, shall I not have the concurrence, aye, the acclamation, of this meeting, on proposing the following resolution: —"Resolved,—That, convened as we have been, for the purpose of aiding in the great cause of freedom from the bonds of SLAVERY, we should deem ourselves wanting to that cause were we to withhold the expression of our admiration for those magnanimous men and women in the United States of North America who, in the face of unparalleled difficulties, (we rejoicingly learn, now in process of diminution,) with a zeal that no danger can damp, with a love that no opposition can quench, continue to be nobly banded in the holy cause of freeing their coloured brethren from the cruelest bondage that has ever afflicted and disgraced the human race.—That, in tendering thus the expression of our sentiments, we gladly embrace the opportunity of joining our voice with that of all men everywhere, who respect the right of free discussion,

and the sacred liberty of the press, in condemnation of the atrocious outrage lately committed at Lexington, in Kentucky, in violation of those rights,—so nobly, but on that occasion so vainly, sustained by the high-souled, but still indomitable, CASSIUS M. CLAY.—For these true heroes of humanity we devoutly invoke the blessing of ALMIGHTY GOD; while we hereby offer them the homage of our respectful, admiring, and affectionate sympathy."—It will be observed, Sir, that the resolution embraces emphatic notice of a subject of which the knowledge has doubtless become sufficiently general to excuse my dwelling on it beyond a passing reference to the fact, that it has been justly regarded of sufficient importance to call forth the marked and indignant reprobation of a man high and honoured in the State—I allude to the mention of the disgraceful occurrence at Lexington, in the course of a speech by Lord John Russell, on a recent occasion, in the City of Edinburgh. And more I need not say. This dark and daring deed is its own most fitting expositor! Let our friends in that land—which we hope *yet* to see a land of freedom—know how we think of that foul deed; and let it go forth from this room, and may it be echoed by many such meetings in Britain, that there are hearts here which—in proportion as they hate oppression in every form, but most of all when it *dares* to profane the holy name of liberty—delight in doing honour to the good, the brave, the generous, and the true. Sir, let these words—the words of the resolution which I have undertaken to submit to the many hundreds here assembled—find an energetic response from them; and so soon as your mighty steamers shall have borne them over the Western deep, glad welcome will be given them, and many a heart beat high in the consciousness of the generous work you have achieved this evening.

BIRMINGHAM.

MR. JOSEPH BARKER preached two very impressive sermons at Newhall Hill Chapel, on Sunday the 7th December, to numerous congregations. His text was, "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is henceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick, and it giveth light to all that are in the house." Mr. Barker, at great length, treated upon "The Christian's Duty" which was described in the simple expression of doing good, and in raising the moral and spiritual well-being of our race. The simplicity and earnestness of his manner must have produced a great and good effect on the minds of his hearers. The following evening a tea-party was held in the spacious School-room beneath the Chapel, at which Mr. Barker attended, and gave an interesting account of his labours in the Northern and other districts, in endeavouring to improve the condition of mankind. It appears that in Northumberland and Durham there are not less than from 70 to 100 congregations; in the West Riding of Yorkshire, 70 to 100; in the Staffordshire

Potteries and the neighbourhood, about the same; also several societies in North and South Wales, and Westmoreland; but he entreated his hearers not to be satisfied with only enlightening those around them, but to carry their views beyond their own neighbourhood and country. He denied that a little knowledge was injurious to man; and if any excesses were committed while he possessed it, it was not because he had a little, but because he had not a great deal. He illustrated this position, by observing that if a bird had only one wing, and in trying to fly it began to flutter about so that it could make no progress, the fault was not in its having one wing, but, because it had not two: so it was in knowledge. A little knowledge was very good, but a great deal was better. Mankind was made to enjoy intelligence, liberty, and happiness; and in order to promote this end, he intended, with the aid of his steam-press, to print and distribute, especially among the working classes, publications on subjects of Christian benevolence. He concluded his address by urging his hearers to work as they ought, for it is the Unitarians who hold the pure truths that are to regenerate mankind. The meeting, over which G. S. Kenrick, Esq., of West Bromwich, presided, proposed a vote of thanks to Mr. Barker, and expressed a wish that he would take the earliest opportunity of again visiting Birmingham.

EXTRACT FROM THE "CHRISTIAN REFORMER."

Mr. Barker's friends have put out another appeal in behalf of the subscription now in progress for the purchase of a steam-press to present to him. Appended to the appeal is a letter from Mr. Barker to Dr. Bateman, in which he describes what use he has already made of his press, and what further and more extensive use he designs to make. The letter is a very interesting document. We regret we have not room for it this month. When Unitarians, zealous for the promotion of pure religion and theological knowledge, learn that Mr. Barker has already printed more than 30,000 volumes of Dr. Channing's works, 15,000 copies of Elwall's Trial, 12,000 "One Hundred Arguments," 16,000 Questions to Trinitarians, Dr. John Taylor on Original Sin, and many other unobjectionable and admirable works, we cannot but hope their scruples (if they have entertained any) are removed, and that they will promptly mark their sense of obligation to this intrepid and persevering advocate of religious truth.

MRS. FRY ON DEATH PUNISHMENT.

The late Sir Samuel Romilly, in his Diary, mentions that he had an interview on one occasion with Mrs. Elizabeth Fry, a lady whose name is associated in all our minds with all that is pious and benevolent. The conversation turned upon the subject of capital punishment, and Mrs. Fry said that the impression produced in her mind (from all that her extensive knowledge of criminals put her in possession of) was, that the influence of executions on morals, especially of the young, was of a most pernicious character. Sir S. Romilly makes the remark, that, "he very much valued her opinion."

SUNDERLAND.

The Rev. G. Harris of Newcastle, has been delivering a Course of Three Lectures on "*Death Punishment*," in the Lecture Theatre of the Athenæum, in that town, to numerous and highly respectable audiences, consisting of persons of every denomination of Christians. The Lectures were delivered with great earnestness and feeling, and some of the passages were exceedingly eloquent. In the first place, the Rev. Gentleman showed that capital punishments are opposed to reason, common sense, experience, and the spirit and precepts of Him who came to seek and save those who were lost; he quoted from the writings of Lord Bacon, and Sir Edward Coke, and noticed in terms of approbation the labours of Voltaire, Montesquieu, John Howard, Sir Samuel Romilly, Roscoe, Basil Montague, William Allen, Sydney Taylor, Ewart, Lord John Russell, and Fitzroy Kelly, in this cause, and gave a long catalogue of crimes which at different periods of British history have been made punishable with death, grouping them in a very striking and effective manner, and concluded his Course by proving that death punishments tend to brutalize not only individuals but society, that they are useless for the prevention of crimes, nay, contribute rather to their increase than diminution, and that they are contrary to the Gospel of the grace of God.

On Christmas Day, according to annual custom, about 80 children belonging to Little Carter-lane Sunday School, assembled in the Chapel, to have their annual treat. A very pleasing and appropriate address was delivered to them by Dr. Hatton, to which they paid great attention, and separated highly delighted; perhaps not more from the nature of the treat as from the kindly feelings shown to them by those present. And when we consider that a greater part of these children reside in the courts and alleys of that neighbourhood, it must indeed have been gratifying to their Minister and Teachers to find them so clean and well behaved.

JERSEY.

It gives us great pleasure to hear that the Trustees of the Unitarian Chapel, Grove Place, St. Helen's, have engaged the services of the Rev. Mr. Smith, formerly of Stockport, who commenced his labours on Christmas Day. We sincerely hope the cause of Unitarianism will prosper under his ministry.

The remains of Mrs. Walker, of Killingbeck Hall, were interred in Mill Hill Chapel, Leeds, on Friday, December 18th. The hearse containing the remains of the lamented lady was followed by a train of seven private carriages in addition to three mourning coaches.

MACCLESFIELD.

On Sunday, December 7, a sermon was preached in the Presbyterian Chapel, King Edward-street, by the Rev. R. Aspland, of Dukinfield, in behalf of the Sunday School, after which a collection was made, amounting to £13.

CHATHAM MECHANICS' INSTITUTION.

A LECTURE on Early English History was delivered at the above institution, Chatham, on the evening of Wednesday last, by the Rev. J. C. Means; the lecture was very numerously attended, notwithstanding the unfavourable state of the weather, and gave great satisfaction; being something more than a dry statement of well-known facts. Mr. Means fully showed the absurdity of some of the accounts given in our popular school histories; and, without any parade of learning or pedantry of manner, proved himself to be a deeply read and well-informed scholar, and one, too, possessing a very retentive memory, for, with only a slight glance now and then at his note-book, he gave a most lucid and comprehensive detail of the most remarkable events connected with the history of our island, from the earliest period down to that of the Saxon King Egbert and his immediate descendants, when Christianity finally triumphed and became the prevailing religion. In his next lecture he is to commence with the invasions of the Danes or Northmen, and bring his hearers down to the time of the Norman Conquest.

TAUNTON MECHANICS' INSTITUTE.

IT is with satisfaction we state that the Committee of this Institution intends adopting the liberal plan of throwing open their public hall to the working men of the town, and at such a charge as will enable the poorest to partake of the advantages to be offered. This is a step in the right direction. Amid all the efforts that have been made for the improvement of the age, the working man has been over-looked. We have little doubt that the advantages which our Institute offers will be readily sought after, and, using the vigorous and eloquent language of the Rev. Mr. Montgomery at the late anniversary meeting, we hope it will be found that the honest and industrious artizans of this town "are anxious to step into a broader circle of humanity—one in which they may feel that they are men, who have minds, and are called of God to use them."—*Somerset County Gazette.*

SELECTIONS.

REGARD not what others think, though they be thy nearest friends: but study only to please God, and thou shalt please Him indeed. Do not deform thy face with looking out asquint to the custom of the world, but look straight forward on Him, and so thou shalt be beautiful in His eyes. . . . . The roots of plants are hidden under ground, so that themselees are not seen; but they appear in their branches, and flowers, and fruits, which argue there is a root and life in them; thus the Graces of the Spirit planted in the soul, though themselves invisible, yet discover their being and life in the tract of a Christian's life, his words and actions, and the frame of his carriage. . . . . That flower which follows the sun, doth so even in cloudy days: when it doth not shine forth, yet it follows the hidden course and motion of it. So the soul that moves after God, keeps that course when

he hides his face: is content, yea, is glad at His will in all estates, or conditions, or events. . . . . The least difficulties and scruples in a tender conscience should not be roughly encountered: they are as a knot in a silken thread, and require a gentle and wary hand to loose them.—*Archbishop Leighton.*

Consolation.—If we go at noon-day to the bottom of a deep pit, we shall be able to see the stars, which, on the level ground, are invisible. Even so, from the depths of grief—worn, wretched, seared, and dying—the blessed apparitions and tokens of heaven make themselves visible to our eyes.

Time Interrogated.—Who art thou?—All conquering Time. Why on the tiptoe raised?—I always run. Thy feet are winged?—My speed is like the wind. Why in thy hand a razor?—I inflict wounds sharper than the sword. A grisly lock upon thy forehead grows?—That they who meet may seize me. But behind thy head is bald?—In vain would he who lets me pass recall or stay me. Stranger, for thy behoof thus fashioned was I placed.

MARRIAGES.

At Birmingham, on the 26th, by the Rev. John Howard Ryland, of Bradford, Yorkshire, Mr. James Lindsay, of London, to Ann Burrel, daughter of Mr. William Jackson, of Smethwick.

On the 25th November, at the Unitarian Chapel, Nottingham, by the Rev. B. Carpenter, Sir Charles Fellows, of Russell Square, London, to Eliza, only daughter of Francis Hart, Esq., Banker, Nottingham.

27th, at the Unitarian Chapel, Benton Street, Gloucester, by the Rev. H. Davies, LL.D. Mr. Thomas Murrel, gardener, of that city, to Sarah, second daughter of Mr. James Cumley, of Kingscote, in this county.

On December 1st, at Paradise Street Chapel, Liverpool, by the Rev. James Martineau, Mr. J. C. English, to Miss Margaret Abraham.

December 3rd, at Hanover Street Chapel, Halifax, by the Rev. P. James Wright, Mr. John Cooper, to Miss Jane Scott, both of Halifax.

At Mill Hill Chapel, Leeds, by the Rev. C. Wickstead, Mr. Matthew Enington, to Miss Hannah Dean, both of this place.

On the 25th ult., at the Unitarian Church, Cheltenham, by the Rev. W. Bankhead, Mr. Thomas Smith, to Miss Jane Everess, both of that town.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

"J. E." is thanked for his kind wishes.

"W. W. M.'s" views are our own, and should we meet with that success we anticipate, they shall be carried out.

"M. S." The address of Mr. Joseph Barker is, Wortley, near Leeds.

If "T. P." will favour us with the information he speaks of, we shall be happy to make what use we can of it.

Temperance.—Our Magazine will be open to the cause of temperance, and, indeed, every topic that tends to promote morality.

*** Communications for the Editor to be sent to 7, Farringdon Street, London.